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PLACES OF INNOVATION AND EXCHANGE

The Extra-University Institutions for Historical Research

Emmanuelle Picard and Gabriele Lingelbach

In the majority of European countries, universities have occupied a central position in the development of history as a discipline. However, over the past two centuries a certain number of non-university institutions have appeared and have become active poles of historical research. Their development, sometimes on the fringes of the institutional university world, fulfils specific functions, principal among which is proposing a *modus operandi* alternative to the less innovative approach found in universities and subject to the weight of tradition.

From this point of view, the non-university institutions can be characterized as having greater reactivity and adaptability, as well as increased flexibility. These features enable them to focus on new issues within an original methodological and professional framework. They provide opportunities to develop areas of research which would be marginal in the university context, to renew approaches, and to recruit researchers with atypical profiles. More often than not, these non-university institutions are free from the constraints of granting degrees, unlike universities, and when they do have a teaching role, it is restricted to research seminars. Especially in university systems in which a substantial part of the working time of the employees is taken up by teaching, extra-university research institutions enable historians to devote themselves to research. Moreover, the creation of non-university teaching and research institutions can be analysed as a means to avoid radical reform of the university system, the cornerstone of the edifice, but instead add new structures with which universities can forge strong links without challenging their external position. These ‘adjusting variables’ of public research policy play an important role in scientific innovation, which they often drive and showcase.

This chapter analyses the French case in detail, because historical research in France has been conducted to a large extent outside the universities. Comparison will be made with Germany, where similar developments have taken place, but also with marked differences. Attention should also be paid to the fact that the waves of the founding of extra-university institutions have varied over time according to the established structure in the tertiary education sector. The characteristics and functions of these non-university institutions can be viewed in light of four main dimensions: their input to the thematic and methodological

innovation of the historical discipline, and the introduction of ‘socially sensitive issues’; their role as ‘stopgaps’ in regard to functions which cannot (any longer) be performed by the existing institutions; their place in the process of professionalization and career management; and the role of the state in institutions of this type.

Scientific innovation, crucial topics

Non-university institutions are characterized mainly by their ability to open new fields of research, for instance social and economic history, area studies, gender and colonial studies, and to implement new methods such as collective surveys and statistics. This openness may spring largely from the inclusion of foreign researchers or national researchers working on foreign matters, these being the principal mediators of models and problematics developed outside the national frontiers. Moreover, these institutions are often places in which subject boundaries are questioned, and interdisciplinary approaches are employed. All these characteristics define these institutions as suitable places for the constant questioning of assumptions, and the natural places in which to develop treatment of ‘socially sensitive issues’.

In pre-1868 France, only the Collège de France performed this function.¹ Since its creation, the objective of the Collège has been to welcome fields of knowledge poorly represented or not represented at all in universities, and especially rare and ancient languages. This particularity has been made possible by its staff recruitment procedures. Contrary to universities, chairs at the Collège are linked to individuals and not to subjects. Hence, when a vacancy occurs, the title of the chair is discussed by the assembly of professors, which can adapt it to new scientific trends. The assembly therefore has a regulatory function based less on the anticipation of new developments in specific areas of research than on *a posteriori* recognition: the title of the chair is formulated in such a way that it dictates the name of its future holder. This is, to a certain extent, the antithesis of university practice: the framework of subjects must be constantly renewed at the Collège, whereas the academic model tends to reinforce it. Nevertheless, this innovatory function is not equally efficient in every subject area. Whilst it works well for relatively less-studied subjects, it is less pertinent in the case of standard academic ones, for which recruitment is traditionally made among professors already holding a chair at the Sorbonne.

¹ Yves Laporte, *Le Collège de France*, (Paris, 1990).

In the late 1860s a veritable ‘embryo’ of a non-university research institute came into being, with major consequences for historical research. In 1867-1868, Victor Duruy, the minister for public instruction, ordered a broad survey on the situation of universities and the teaching of the sciences in France, which came to the conclusion that research in the universities was deficient. This raised the question of the nature of the reform to be undertaken: should the universities be restructured? In their entirety or should more focused solutions be found? Duruy pragmatically chose the latter solution, in the conviction that the entire system was impossible to transform. He persuaded Emperor Napoleon III on the one hand to create teaching and research laboratories at the universities, and on the other to institute in the capital, by a decree of 31 July 1868, an *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes* (henceforth EPHE) in which teaching would be based on the specialized research seminar system.² Initially comprising four sections, the last of which was devoted to historical and philological sciences, in 1886 the EPHE introduced a fifth section for religious sciences. This project was rapidly accomplished because it was both very flexible and fairly inexpensive. The EPHE did not exist physically – in fact, its teachers held their seminars at existing institutions, particularly the Sorbonne – but it promoted a new form of scientific work. This was particularly noticeable in history, which at that time was in the process of adopting scientific methods and status, with much thought devoted to ‘historical method’, the principal advocates of which were professors at the new EPHE: Gabriel Monod (who directed the fourth section and was at the same time editor of the *Revue historique*), Emile Boutroux, and Gaston Paris.³

In the aftermath of the First World War the social sciences flourished. Canonical subjects such as history had to come to terms with them, as evidenced by the discussions surrounding the creation of the *Annales* in 1929 by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre.⁴ After the Second World War, this attempt to envisage the social sciences as a set of interacting subjects which questioned the traditional divisions of the scientific field was embodied in two new institutions. After 1945, the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) started to reconsider the established divisions among disciplines and subjects. The possibility of breaking free from the straitjacket imposed by the universities was discussed. The CNRS

² Brigitte Mazon, *Aux origines de l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. Le rôle du mécénat américain: 1920-1960*, (Paris, 1988).

³ Gabriele Lingelbach, *Klio macht Karriere. Die Institutionalisierung der Geschichtswissenschaft in Frankreich und den USA in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, (Göttingen, 2003).

⁴ See among others Lutz Raphael, *Die Erben von Bloch und Febvre: Annales-Geschichtsschreibung und nouvelle histoire in Frankreich 1945-1980*, (Stuttgart, 1994).

Managing Committee examined the feasibility of replacing the existing commissions – philology and linguistics, history and archaeology, history of the arts, ethnology and economics – with new, resolutely multidisciplinary ones dedicated to the Antiquities, the Orient, the medieval world, and modern civilization. The final decision was to be a compromise, however. Although the social sciences did not form a group, closely germane disciplines were merged, so that, for instance, the newly-created Classical Antiquity Commission obliged archaeologists, linguists and historians to cooperate with each other, at least to some extent.⁵

The issue of interdisciplinarity in the field of humanities was also raised within the EPHE. In 1945, Charles Morazé proposed the creation of a sixth section at the institution. This section was to be dedicated to the social sciences so that researchers in the various social disciplines – particularly sociologists, economists and historians – could work together. In 1975, this sixth section was transformed into the autonomous Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (henceforth EHESS). During this period, the academic staff increased notably, rising from 32 *directeurs d'études* in 1951, to 110 in 1966 and 144 in 1990; and to these an ever-increasing number of teaching assistants, followed by assistant professors, were added. The elective recruitment method (the existing staff being the electors), freed from the constraints of the university recruitment procedure, enabled the institution to choose younger scholars with original profiles. These procedures stimulated large-scale collective studies, which increasingly replaced individual research, as well as encouraging investigations in new domains such as the 'cultural areas' of the 1950s, the history of science, the history of women, colonial history, and, more recently, environmental history.⁶

The Centre de Recherches Historiques – laboratory of the sixth section of the EPHE founded in 1949 – specialized in such issues from the outset. Directed by Fernand Braudel, the Centre first concentrated on large-scale inquiries into the economic history of early modern France. In the 1960s, its research broadened to encompass a new interest in the history of mentalities. However, the main innovation was the introduction of *enquête collective*, which also entailed a new conception of authorship. For example, the name of Ruggiero Romano did not appear on the cover of the book on *Villages désertés et histoire économique, XIe-XVIIIe siècle* (1965), although he had edited it. Asked as to the reason for this omission, Romano explained: 'That was the rule! For Lucien Febvre and Fernand Braudel

⁵ Elisabeth Pradoura, 'La conquête d'une place pour les sciences humaines au CNRS: 1939-1949', paper (Paris, november 1987); on line: <http://picardpl.ivry.cnrs.fr/~jfpicard/Pradou.html> [accessed 2009].

⁶ Jacques Revel and Nathan Wachtel (eds), *Une école pour les sciences sociales. De la VIe section à l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales*, (Paris, 1996).

the entire project of the Ecole and the Centre de Recherches Historiques was a collective one. Collective meant two things. First a shared idea on what history should be: economic history. Then a topic which was selected for its general importance: a question not yet explored in France or a domain which should be developed.’ For scholars involved in such research, the Centre proved to be a highly stimulating environment. As a young *chef de travaux* recalled: ‘We tried to define a common problem, but the domains and the approaches under consideration were various. For me, it was a real immersion, a *bouillon de culture historique*.’⁷ Entering the sixth section gave rise to high expectations, for it held out the promise of participating in a dynamic form of historical research – as Christiane Klapitsch-Zuber remembered: the ‘majority of the group of young historians around Braudel were foreigners (Italians, Spanish, Portuguese, Yugoslavians, but also Hungarians, Poles, Americans).’⁸

However, the role of these non-university institutions has often also required them to address ‘socially sensitive issues’, whether contemporary matters, subjects with political implications, or ones charged with particularly intense memories. In France (as in other European countries), treatment of the two world wars provides a good example. Research on the world wars required the collecting and editing of documents, and this eventually led to the founding of new institutions engaged in research activity outside the universities. As early as 1917 the Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine arose on the private initiative of a couple of Parisian industrialists, the Leblancs, who from the outbreak of the First World War had collected every possible document concerning both the origins and the unfolding of the conflict. They donated their collection to the state, which installed it in the Château de Vincennes and appointed the young professor Pierre Renouvin as its curator. Administratively attached to the University of Paris in the 1930s, but maintaining its independent status, the collection subsequently developed into a twofold institution of conservation (archives and libraries) and research (conferences and publications).

It was again externally to the universities that institutionalised study of the Second World War was carried out. The Comité d’Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale was founded in December 1951 by merging the Commission d’Histoire de l’Occupation et de la Libération de la France and the Comité d’Histoire de la Guerre, founded in October 1944 and June 1945,

⁷ Cited in Paul-André Rosental (ed.), *Pour une histoire de la recherche collective en sciences sociales. Réflexions autour du cinquantième du Centre de Recherches Historiques*, special issue of *Cahiers du Centre de Recherches Historiques*, vol. 36, 2005, pp. 142-143.

⁸ Christiane Klapitsch-Zuber, ‘La storia delle donne. Un itinerario collettivo e individuale’, in: *Genesis*, 1 (2002), p. 222.

respectively. The new institution was administratively attached to the Presidency of the Council and had an extensive network of correspondents in the provinces. Run by the historian Henri Michel, its principal task was to elicit accounts of various aspects of the Resistance and the Occupation while at the same time coordinating studies and publications on the Second World War. Both its staff and funding were provided by the CNRS. In 1978, the Comité d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale was integrated into the Institut d'Histoire du Temps Présent, a CNRS laboratory which inherited, in particular, its library, the first acquisitions of which dated to 1944. The first research into the Algerian War – a highly controversial topic in French historiography – was also to be undertaken within this non-university structure.⁹

The need to develop historical studies on the world wars generated extra-university institutions in Germany as well. One of the tasks of the Reichsarchiv, founded in 1919, was to explore the lead-up to and the history of the First World War against the backdrop of the so-called 'war guilt paragraph' of the Treaty of Versailles. The resulting historical Reichskommission began, among other things, with the editing of sources concerning Prussian foreign policy. After the Second World War the Deutsches Institut für Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Zeit, later renamed 'Institut für Zeitgeschichte', had the task of promoting scientific research on these crucial and delicate issues with the help of permanently employed scholars.¹⁰ German national history after 1945 was later included in the canon, and since reunification, the history of the German Democratic Republic has been investigated as well. Research results are published in the Institute's journal *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (since 1953), in its own publication series (since the early 1960s the scientific series of the *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, since 1970 for example the *Studien zur Zeitgeschichte*), and also in editions of primary sources. Funded by grants from the national government and several states, the Institute began with compilation of an archive to provide researchers with documents especially on the NS-era, and with a large-scale library. However, the range of the Institute's activities extended well beyond research: it rendered expert opinions for courts, authorities and governmental departments – for instance during the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials of the mid-1960s, where academic and juristic accounting for the NS past went hand-in-hand.

Work on a controversial and contemporary topic has been the main concern of another

⁹ François Bédarida (ed.), *L'histoire et le métier d'historien en France, 1945-1995*, (Paris, 1995).

¹⁰ The development of this institute in Munich is described in Horst Möller and Udo Wengst (eds), *50 Jahre Institut für Zeitgeschichte. Eine Bilanz*, (Munich, 1999).

West German extra-university research institute: the Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung in Potsdam. The Zentrum was founded some years after the reunification of Germany and was commissioned to conduct research on the history of East Germany since 1945. Financed by the state of Brandenburg, by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, and – for some individual projects – by various foundations, the institute has worked on topics which could never have been so rapidly and so solidly established at German universities.

An institutional ‘stopgap’

Nineteenth-century Germany did not develop the French model of specialized research schools. Yet the landscape of universities in the two countries differed only geographically, not in terms of organization: during the nineteenth century, universities continued to be the dominant institutions in the higher education sector, and they were also the most important research centres. Hybrid extra-university institutions, like for example the French *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes*, which furnished education as well as conducting research, were exceptional in Germany.

Another factor played a crucial role: Germany’s fragmentation before 1870-1871, and later the federal structure of the political system after unification of the Reich, hindered the founding of national research institutes. This factor also explains why so many of the early extra-university institutions focused on regional history. At the turn of the century, however, a new situation arose, in that university-based historical science was caught between two conflicting pressures. On the one hand, the need for research was increased by the process of scientification and specialization. In both the natural sciences and the humanities, a tendency towards ‘large-scale research’ developed, with projects being undertaken which exceeded the capacities of individual historians teaching at universities. This increasingly required a division of labour. On the other hand, the growing number of students and, consequently, the teaching overload of scholars, reduced the time budget for research. Hence the establishment of extra-university research institutes was advocated by both natural scientists and scholars of the humanities. The ‘first German teaching and research institute for the humanities based on private initiative’ was probably the Königlich Sächsisches Institut für Kultur- und Universalgeschichte in Leipzig.¹¹ Still integrated into the teaching structures of the University

¹¹ Christoph Frhr. von Maltzahn, ‘Außeruniversitäre Organisationsformen in der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert’, in: Rüdiger vom Bruch and Rainer A. Müller (eds),

of Leipzig, the Institut was indicative of the trend to regard research in such institutes as no longer an individual matter but a cooperative project.¹² It was of particular importance that this institutional innovation should be combined with an attempt to ensure thematically and / or methodologically innovative approaches of historical science with the help of an institute. The Institut's founder Karl Lamprecht was a highly controversial figure in Germany, owing to his contention that historical science should be extended to encompass social, economic, and cultural history topics, and that it should use social-science methods.

The Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft, which provided the framework for the founding of the Institut für Deutsche Geschichte in 1917, was structured on a different model.¹³ It was a pure research institution financed by federal and private funds, and it had no direct connections with the university. The Gesellschaft's research staff engaged in fundamental research and, especially, worked on long-term projects and research questions that could only be tackled by means of teamwork. Accordingly, the initiator of the Institut für Deutsche Geschichte, the medievalist Paul Fridolin Kehr, planned not only to publish extensive editions of primary sources but also to conduct important research in historical cartography and compile a historical-geographical encyclopaedia of places.¹⁴ The work was to be performed by permanently-appointed historians; assistants would support them and at the same time learn the techniques of working on primary sources. However, the outbreak of the First World War made it necessary to reduce the research programme to a few, mainly editorial, projects, the *Germania Sacra* being one of them. Neither methodologically nor thematically innovative, the Institute was subject to financial cutbacks in times of war and inflation and was consequently not nearly as productive as had been planned.

In around 1900, similar phenomena occurred in the United States, where, as in Germany, specialized schools were the exception. The Department of Historical Research of the Carnegie Institution, founded in 1930, was the first (and owing to the general lack of public funding for humanistic research, one of the few) extra-university institutions in the United

Formen außerstaatlicher Wissenschaftsförderung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Deutschland im europäischen Vergleich, (Stuttgart, 1990), pp. 185-210, esp. p. 196.

¹² See Matthias Middell, *Weltgeschichtsschreibung im Zeitalter der Verfachlichung und Professionalisierung. Das Leipziger Institut für Kultur- und Universalgeschichte*, (Leipzig, 2005), pp. 216-421.

¹³ Pierangelo Schiera, *Il laboratorio borghese: scienza e politica nella Germania dell'Ottocento*, (Bologna, 1987).

¹⁴ Wolfgang Neugebauer, 'Die Gründungskonstellation des Kaiser-Wilhelm-Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte und dessen Arbeit bis 1945. Zum Problem historischer "Großforschung" in Deutschland', in: Bernhard vom Brocke and Hubert Laitko (eds), *Die Kaiser-Wilhelm- / Max-Planck-Gesellschaft und ihre Institute. Studien zu ihrer Geschichte. Das Harnack-Prinzip*, (Berlin - New York, 1996), pp. 445-468, esp. pp. 451-452.

States created to undertake professional historical research.¹⁵ Furthermore, projects at Carnegie were developed by means of teamwork; they were impossible to manage within the framework of the daily routine of university teaching. Amongst its activities, the Institute issued archive guides and several editions of primary sources, which by their nature were highly time-consuming and long-term projects.

However, the heyday of extra-university research institutes in Germany did not come until the end of the Second World War.¹⁶ For example, the Kommission für die Geschichte des Parlamentarismus und der politischen Parteien was founded in 1951. This had the political-educational mission ‘of enhancing the reputation of the parliamentary representations in the Federal Republic, and increasing public participation in the political life of Germany, thereby consolidating the democratic system of the Federal Republic’, as the Secretary of the Interior put it.¹⁷ The historians who had promoted its establishment wanted historical science to play a major role in the construction of West German democracy; but at the same time they stressed the importance of conducting basic research. Consequently, the Kommission became highly active in publishing primary sources, as well as studies on domestic political development and the parties of the Weimar Republic and the period directly after the Second World War. With the help of federal funds, the Kommission conducted projects that could not have been undertaken within the framework of university institutes.

In 1956, the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, which had developed from the Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft, created a separate Institut für Geschichte based in Göttingen. The Institut carried forward long-term projects, like the edition of the *Germania Sacra*, and undertook new projects like the Repertorium of the German Königspfalzen. The Göttingen Institute developed into an institution in which methodologically and thematically innovative research questions were pursued by the historians in its employ. More important, however, was the fact that the

¹⁵ See Eckhard Fuchs and Gabriele Lingelbach, ‘Private Wissenschaftsförderung in den USA: Die Carnegie Institution und ihr Department of Historical Research 1903-1928’, in: *Jahrbuch für Historische Bildungsforschung*, 8 (2002), pp.199-228.

¹⁶ Not all the extra-university institutions for historical research founded after 1945 in West Germany are analyzed in this chapter. Some others should at least be mentioned, however, such as the Gottfried-Herder-Institut in Marburg, the Arbeitskreis für moderne Sozialgeschichte, the Collegium Carolinum in Munich, the Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt, and the younger institutions such as the Geisteswissenschaftliches Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Osteuropas. The umbrella organization for the German extra-university institutions of historical research, the Arbeitsgemeinschaft historischer Forschungseinrichtungen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, has more than 90 member-institutions (<http://www.ahf-muenchen.de/Mitglieder/>). Historical research is also conducted in a couple of multidisciplinary institutes: the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung and the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin.

¹⁷ Martin Schumacher, ‘Gründung und Gründer der Kommission für Geschichte des Parlamentarismus und der politischen Parteien’, in: Karl Dietrich Bracher (ed.), *Staat und Parteien. Festschrift für Rudolf Morsey*, (Berlin, 1992), pp. 1029-1054, esp. p. 1031.

Göttingen Institut provided a large number of scholarships for junior as well as senior scholars from Germany and abroad. It consequently became a lively centre of intellectual exchange. This international platform was offered especially at the level of doctoral studies by the Institut für Europäische Geschichte in Mainz, founded in 1950, where generations of Eastern and Western scholars were working (and indeed living) under the same roof well before the fall of the Berlin Wall.¹⁸

But the institutional landscape was even more diversified. Besides the institutions dedicated to fundamental research and long-term projects, and those which encouraged young scientists, Germany also saw the development of institutions that served a ‘respite function’ for university-established scientists by giving them opportunities to concentrate on research and the writing of more extensive works free of teaching duties. Especially at a time of growing teaching loads, such extra-university institutions are of paramount importance. In Germany, the Historisches Kolleg in Munich, founded in 1980, is one of these extra-university institutions. First exclusively financed with private, philanthropic funds, and subsequently with federal funds, the Kolleg has the structural features of an Institute for Advanced Study and disburses not project-related, but personnel-related, funding. It offers scholarship-holders – mainly established university historians from Germany and abroad – opportunities to take sabbaticals and to complete major publications in the college’s facilities. Structural conditions in German universities are changing in such a way that historians have scant time for their research between growing teaching loads on the one hand and growing administrative responsibilities on the other. Consequently, extra-university institutions like the Kolleg are possible institutional bases for those who try to maintain Wilhelm von Humboldt’s ideal – reference to which is often exaggerated in the public discourse – of a balanced union between teaching and research. In this way institutions such as the Kolleg function as scientific ‘stopgaps’.

Different careers?

Extra-university institutions have developed more flexible personnel management practices which enable them to resort to individuals whose profiles would exclude them from universities. This is obviously more the case in countries where higher education is strongly regulated by public authorities governed and composed of academics who are civil servants.

¹⁸ See *Institut für Europäische Geschichte Mainz 1950-2000. Eine Dokumentation*, (Mainz, 2000).

Until recently, these extra-university institutions were the only places which could recruit foreigners, even temporarily. However, depending on the nation, careers take varying forms. At the one extreme is a system of scholarships limited to a few years; and, at the other, the creation of civil-servant researcher posts, as happens in France with the CNRS.¹⁹

At the Collège de France, the institutional practice which consists in creating a post for a pre-decided individual allows for various kinds of flexibility: members are chosen less for their formal qualifications and more for their scientific achievements, so that the Collège can recruit scientists with atypical profiles. It is for this reason that foreigners are proportionally more numerous at the Collège than in French universities: 8.5 per cent in the nineteenth century compared to 1 to 2 per cent in the Faculty of Letters of the University of Paris.²⁰ The situation is not fundamentally different at the EPHE, except for the fact that the commitment of the staff is fixed by a specific contract. The EPHE has no chairs; instead it has posts for *directeurs d'études* (defined for the particular individual), which are mostly occupied by personnel who hold chairs elsewhere (university, Collège de France). These directors with multiple posts constitute the majority of the staff at the EPHE. Moreover the regulations governing the EPHE impose no obligations in regard to the profiles of its members, which enables the EPHE to recruit foreigners or personnel without doctorates – as is also the case for the Collège de France. At the time when there were no women on the teaching staff of the university departments in history, a number of them found positions in the CNRS or the EHESS laboratories as *ingénieurs de recherche*. The directorship of the first laboratory in history at the CNRS, l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes founded in the middle of the 1930s, was held by Jeanne Vielliard.²¹

In the second half of the twentieth century, the CNRS, EPHE and EHESS thus became the major institutions for historical research in France. The three institutions, all located in Paris and thereby making the capital even more important for historical scholarship, currently employ a body of researchers and professors whom they recruit freely according to their own criteria. Evolution, however, has tended to erase the differences among these establishments, and between them and the universities. The creation, in 1959, of genuine researcher status within the CNRS – subsequently institutionalized so that, since 1982, the members of the CNRS have been civil servants – and the recruitment by the EPHE and EHESS for the vast

¹⁹ Jean-François Picard (with Gérard Darmon and Elisabeth Pradoura), *La république des savants*, (Paris, 1990).

²⁰ Christophe Charle, 'Le Collège de France', in: Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire*, vol. 2: *La nation*, (Paris, 1997) 3, pp. 389-424.

²¹ See the contribution by Louis Holtz ('L'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes (IRHT), premier laboratoire d'histoire au CNRS') tp Rosental (ed.), *Pour une histoire de la recherche collective en sciences sociales*.

majority of their posts of individuals whose academic profiles are identical to those of their university colleagues, have tended to blur the distinctions.

The main explanation for this evolution resides in the very close links which these institutions maintain with universities, particularly in matters of recruitment. Indeed, the assemblies empowered to recruit (assemblies of professors by sector at the EPHE and EHESS, a National Committee for the CNRS) are mostly composed of university professors who tend to choose candidates with traditional profiles. Moreover the similarity between the universities and the extra-university institutions is reinforced by their use of the same terms to designate the status of their staffs. For instance the EHESS has its *maîtres de conférence* and its *maîtres-assistants* exactly as the universities do. In the 1980s several decrees were issued with a view to harmonizing the situation and allowing the easier movement of individuals between institutions. The same has occurred at other higher education establishments that have developed historical research since the end of the Second World War: the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (political studies), the écoles normales supérieures (Ulm, Sèvres, Saint-Cloud, Fontenay: selective institutions which use highly competitive entrance examinations to pre-recruit future civil servants), or even the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (oriental languages and civilizations).

This standardizing tendency may also be explained by the limited importance given to history in the large range of disciplines covered by these extra-university institutions. In spite of the early presence of history in the CNRS, the subject eventually became the smallest of the social sciences as it was overtaken by the other disciplines, especially sociology. Indeed, the presence of history within the CNRS is in inverse proportion to its dominant position in universities. Within the latter, history is both well developed (with numerous posts) and highly normative (professional success requires a career encompassing an école normale supérieure, the *agrégation* and the Sorbonne). In this situation the CNRS exerts no particular attraction, except as a temporary solution when there is a shortage of university posts – as was the case in the 1930s and 1970s, for instance. On the other hand, the CNRS constitutes a real opportunity for more technical or specialized subjects which have difficulty in finding a place within the university system. This applies in particular to archaeology, and also to 'exotic' specialities such as Asian studies, Middle East studies, or even Slavic studies.

Thus a sort of division of scientific labour operates in historical research: the universities have the greater number of researchers devoted to studying France and Europe; the CNRS has fewer yet more specialized researchers engaged in the study of distant countries and cultures, as well as prehistory and archaeology. The different skills required for these two areas of

inquiry illustrate the dividing line between two conceptions of history. The university personnel form a coherent group, in terms of training and profiles, and favour a synthetic and scholarly approach to the subject. By contrast, the researchers at the CNRS favour technical specialization, which more often than not implies specific training (rare languages, palaeography, archaeological techniques). This opposition between two ways of being a historian generates the co-existence of two parallel career patterns. Of these two types, a very small minority of CNRS researchers belong structurally to the university pattern but progressively move towards the practices of the second group after entering the institution.

This situation can be illustrated by citing the issue of research laboratories. After the creation of the Institut de Recherche en Histoire des Textes in 1938, the next new laboratories dedicated to history were opened at the CNRS in the late 1970s: 1978 saw the creation of the Institut d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine (which covered the period stretching from the end of the fifteenth century to the Second World War) and the Institut d'Histoire du Temps Présent (specializing in the period beginning in 1945). However, since the 1960s, there have operated so-called 'mixed' laboratories resulting from association between the CNRS and other institutions, mostly universities. These mixed research laboratories have remained the norm in history and generally comprise a very small number of CNRS staff compared to university personnel. The two sections of the National Committee of the CNRS devoted to history are also responsible for recruiting archaeologists, art historians and specialists in non-European civilizations. At the final count, the number of historians, strictly speaking, within the CNRS is low.²²

An active state

Non-university institutions have often been closely linked with political projects, especially in countries with totalitarian regimes, such as Nazi Germany or the Soviet Bloc. In these situations, they have had the very strong political purpose of placing science at the service of the state and its ideological agenda. This was obviously the case of the scientific academies created in the people's democracies and the USSR under close state and party control (as discussed further by Frank Hadler and Attila Pók in this book). In the German Democratic Republic, the Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften and the Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus, which were adjuncts to the central committee of the leading party, the

²² Pradoura, 'La conquête d'une place pour les sciences humaines au CNRS'.

Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (SED), were also essential institutions of extra-university historical research. In Nazi Germany, the Reichsinstitut für Geschichte des Neuen Deutschland was created in 1935 to use and develop history as a 'fighting science' for the new dictatorship, which required the Reichsinstitute, for example, to publish anti-Semitic writings.

Yet the correlation between science and politics can assume less immediately instrumental forms. This is the case in democracies like France, where large investment is made by a part of the political community in the idea that science performs a crucial role in the country's democratic and republican evolution, and that it is a vector of intellectual, social and material improvement. Science is therefore supposed to fall directly within the scope of the state, which is consequently responsible for providing the means necessary for the development of history. This political vision of the role of science was at the heart of university policies at the beginning of the French Third Republic (Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes), and also under the Front Populaire government (Caisse Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique), the Liberation government (CNRS), and during the early years of the French Fifth Republic (EHESS).

The role played by the French state in the development of research institutes can be illustrated with the case of the CNRS.²³ There had been a scientific research fund for the exact sciences in France since 1901. Two new sections were added to it in 1921, one of which was dedicated to legal, literary, archaeological and historical publications. From 1927 onwards, the CNRS could grant funds to subsidize ongoing studies by university personnel, thereby marking a more radical division between these researchers and amateurs. Historians and archaeologists received 60 per cent of the funding allotted to this section. In 1933 the entire mechanism was transposed into a Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, which inherited the functions of both employer and provider of means through the research laboratories, as well as responsibility for orienting and coordinating scientific research. Over time, this sixty-year-old institution has embodied the link between the state and researchers: the former provides the finances and the latter administer them. Today, this relationship based on relative autonomy (the state only marginally indicating the directions to be followed; the scientific community controlling the allocation of resources and evaluation) is being questioned by the creation of funding and evaluation agencies, the members and priorities of

²³ See the collection *Cahiers pour l'Histoire du CNRS*, 1989-1990, 9 vols.

which are directly designated by the government. At the same time, the CNRS is reduced to the status of administrative manager.

Most of the German extra-university research institutions that emerged from the founding boom of the 1950s were also dependent on public funding. There are today only few such institutions which are not exclusively or at least primarily dependent on public funding – be it federal or federal-state money. One of these exceptions is the Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, created by the sponsor Jan Philipp Reemtsma, where a significant number of scientists work on research questions from an interdisciplinary perspective, and especially on contemporary history projects. In contrast, the aforementioned Kommission zur Geschichte des Parlamentarismus or the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, and with it the Göttinger Institut für Geschichte, could not have come into being without federal and federal state funding.

Whilst the state sought to advance fundamental research by means of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, other state institutions had other agendas. This was, for example, the case of the German historical institutes abroad, which were re-founded after the Second World War. Only one of these institutes – that in Rome – had earlier origins.²⁴ The Preußische Historische Station, renamed Deutsches Historisches Institut in 1938, was founded after the opening of the Vatican archives in 1888. It worked predominantly on editing projects like the *Repertorium Germanicum* and provided individual researchers with opportunities to pursue their research. It was re-opened as a federal institution in 1953. The German Historical Institute in Paris followed in 1958, and its equivalents in London in 1976, and in Washington in 1987. After the reunification of Germany, foundations were also instituted in Warsaw and Moscow.²⁵ These new foundations were conceived not so much to conduct important research in the form of editing long-term publications of primary sources as to support German historians wishing to conduct research in the archives of the respective country during shorter research visits. These guest scientists were supported not only financially but also institutionally because the members of the Institute provided their colleagues with information about archival sources in the capitals. Furthermore, the German historical institutes employed staff members who wanted to study the history of the guest country and the relations of the guest country with Germany, respectively.

²⁴ In the nineteenth century, however, more institutes existed abroad: for example the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Rome, at first privately founded in 1829 and then taken over by the Prussian state in 1859, and later another corresponding institute in Athens.

²⁵ See for example Reinhard Elze, 'Das Deutsche Historische Institut in Rom 1888-1988', in: Idem and Arnold Esch (eds), *Das Deutsche Historische Institut in Rom 1888-1988*, (Tübingen, 1990), pp. 1-31 and Detlef Junker (ed.), *The German Historical Institute, 1987-1997, (Reference Guide of the German Historical Institute, 10)*, (Washington, DC, 1998).

However, besides research aims, these institutions also pursued political agendas. They served to facilitate the reintegration of Germany into the international community, in each case the purpose being to foster binational scholarly relations. This twofold task can be observed in the establishment of the Institute in Paris in the late 1950s: conceived by some historians to support German historians who wanted to conduct research in Paris, it was later also given the task of helping to close the rift in German-French academic relations created by the two World Wars, the German occupation, and German atrocities like the murder of Marc Bloch. These were tasks considered worthy of support by the government of Konrad Adenauer, which gave high priority to the reconciliation of France and Germany. Accordingly, the Ministry of the Interior funded the institution. German historians were impressively able to use the readjustment of German foreign policies to acquire institutional and financial resources for their discipline.²⁶

Germany was by no means the only country to create a full set of historical institutions abroad. Also to be mentioned are the various historical and archaeological institutions created by the French state. The Ecole Française d'Athènes was founded as early as 1846. It was followed in 1873-1875 by the Ecole Française de Rome, created with the purpose of studying the history and archaeology of both Italy and Northern Africa. A similar institute was subsequently founded in Egypt. However, the political purpose of these institutes became even more apparent with the foundation of the Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient in Hanoi (1898-1901) and the Institut Français d'Archéologie et d'Art Musulman de Damas (1922). The colonial perspective adopted by these institutes was obvious. In all these cases, as well as in those of the Casa Velazquez in Madrid (1909), the Maison Descartes in Amsterdam (1933), and more recently the Centre Marc Bloch in Berlin (1994), French historians were able to gain additional resources for their discipline.²⁷ But in these cases, too, the political agenda continues to be important today: as the website of the Centre Marc Bloch announces, the Centre's distinction lies in its emphasis on Franco-German integration.

A similar and at that time – 1950 – rather extraordinary form of state intervention occurred with the foundation of the Institut für Europäische Geschichte in Mainz.²⁸ The

²⁶ Ulrich Pfeil, 'Das Deutsche Historische Institut Paris. Eine Neugründung "sur base universitaire"', in: Idem (ed.), *Deutsch-französische Kultur- und Wissenschaftsbeziehungen im 20. Jahrhundert. Ein institutionengeschichtlicher Ansatz*, (Munich, 2007), pp. 281-308.

²⁷ Christophe Charle, 'Enseignement supérieur et expansion internationale (1870-1930): des instituts pour un nouvel empire?', in: Pier Luigi Ballini and Gilles Pécout (eds), *Scuola e nazione in Italia e in Francia nell'ottocento*, (Venice, 2007), pp. 247-278.

²⁸ See Winfried Schulze and Corine Defrance, *Die Gründung des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte*, (Mainz, 1992).

initiative dates back to the French occupation of post-war Germany. Within the framework of the re-education programme, the French administration wanted the Mainz Institute to help overcome nationalistic, ethnic and militaristic ideologemes in Germany and to support German-French reconciliation. The Institute would help shape a new European-minded generation which would leave national antagonisms behind. This entailed a scientific-political conception for the foundation of the institute. The German historians advocating the project, and most prominently among them Fritz Kern, intended to propagate a global and cultural history which would replace the national history approach. They wanted the institute first and foremost to promote a methodically-thematically innovative development which would supersede the predominant form of historiography restricted by national borders and the dominance of political events. For Kern, the institute aimed at more the disciplinary than the political level, although the idea of a European convergence of historians influenced him as well. In the end, neither of the two conflicting conceptions effectively prevailed.

Kern died before the institute opened, and the laicist cultural policies of the French administration were opposed by the deputy director, head of the Department of Occidental History of Religion within the institute. Moreover, the growing sovereignty of the Federal Republic curtailed French cultural-political activities in Mainz. Thereafter, the endeavour of academic institutions to gain autonomy from politics became apparent when one of the two departments of the institute, namely the Department for Universal History, gradually evolved into an academic research institution focused on European history from the sixteenth century onwards, whereas the Department of Occidental History of Religion largely applied itself to the history of the Reformation. Thus, at least some elements of both conceptions were retained in the course of the Institute's further development. It formed a counterpoint to the university historical science of the 1950s, inasmuch as it did not restrict its focus to German history but extended its perspective beyond national borders. The research associates employed at the institute, six at a time, and the directors of the two departments, were concerned with projects on European history. Furthermore, the European notion persisted in so far as the institute not only held international conferences, many of them dealing with European historical topics, but also established – as said – a scholarship programme for domestic and foreign historians to conduct research in Mainz.

In the view of the German government, these goals warranted support because, since the retreat of the occupation forces, the Institute had been financed by German authorities. The state government of Rhineland-Palatinate subsidized the Institute, with the other federal states occasionally contributing funds, and proportions of the scholarships were provided by the

federal Foreign Office. By providing its support, the federal government acknowledged the importance of the cultural-political work of the Institute.

By way of conclusion

This chapter has focused on France and Germany, where extra-university institutions of the kind described have acquired (relative) importance for historical research. But in other European countries, historical research has also been conducted outside academe. In the Eastern Bloc countries before 1989, the academies of sciences provided the ‘natural’ framework for historical research. In Western Europe, party and church institutes, mainly in regard to contemporary history, have sometimes played a major role in national historiography, as is discussed by Lutz Raphael in this volume.

In France the extra-university institutes presented in this chapter have a very long tradition. They have performed a wide range of functions as well: most of them not restricted to history; and when they do deal with history, they are seldom specialized (for example in the history of a particular era). In Germany, the focus of these institutes seems to have been more specific. But in both cases such institutes have proved to be innovative places, flexible in the topics addressed, and open to researchers from different countries and from different intellectual traditions. The bulk of the research has been undertaken at the universities, also in France and Germany, but the historiographical landscape is varied.

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